

REMARKS

Claims 1-38 are pending. Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1, 3-19, 21-34, and 36-38 will be pending, claims 1, 3-5, 9, 15-19, 21-23, 27, 30, 33, 34, and 36-38 having been amended and claims 2, 20, and 35 canceled. There are no issues of new matter.

Claims 2-18, 20-33, and 36-38 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants note that claim 35 was not included in the above listing of objected-to claims and assume this was an inadvertent omission since claim 35 includes subject matter similar to that indicated as allowable in the listed claims. Applicants submit that claim 35 includes allowable subject matter and respond as follows. Claims 1, 19, and 34 have been amended to include allowable claim language from claims 2, 20, and 35, respectively. Claims 2, 20, and 35 have been canceled. Allowable claim 16 has been rewritten in independent form to include claim language from claim 1. Claims 3-5, 9, 15, 17, 18, 21-23, 27, 30, 33, and 36-38 have been amended to update their dependency or cancel redundant language in view of the claim 1, 16, 19, and 34 amendments or to correct minor typographical errors. The claims are allowable.

Claims 1, 19, and 34 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Katoh (US 6,173,433). The rejection is rendered moot by the above amendments.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in condition for immediate allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to enter the amendment and pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, Applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection

with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no.
116692008300.

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Respectfully submitted,

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